DEACON SIMPSON'S TRIP.

BY KATE ERSKINE.

"There's my best coat upstairs in the chest; an' I was countin' on gettin' a new hat anyhow. I guess you could sort o' fix yourself up with your Sunday dress an' things, Maria."

"Why, Amos, you don't mean that you really want to go?" and Mrs. Simpson ceased a moment from driving flies out of the kitchen, as she turned a pair of mild, wondering eyes on her husband.

It was after dinner, and he sat on the stone door step, twisting in his hand the letter that he had just brought from the post office, and seemingly contemplating the distant hills, as though seeking guidance from that quarter. His large straw hat lay on the grass beside him, and a few pieces of hay in his stiff gray hair showed what his occupation for the morning had been.

"There's your cousin Abbie," he continued, "has been wantin' us to come up to the city for a long time to visit her—"

"She ain't invited us more'n once before," interposed his wife.

"An' I think we ought to go. Yes, Joe, I'm a-comin'," he called out, and handing the letter to his wife, Deacon Simpson picked up his jug of molasses-and-water and walked off to the field with long, swinging gait.

His wife watched him until he had disappeared over the knoll, and then murmuring to herself: "What's come over father now?" went back to her task.

"Father's the most surprisin' man I ever see," she said, pulling at the corn-husks, which had become somewhat flattened after her last violent onslaught; "but I've lived with him too long not to have learned just to let him have his own way—leastways to seem to—an' he's always sure to come round. Father's real kind o' sensible after all." At which last remark the yellow cat blinked her eyes, the kettle put on an extra steam, and the very flies buzzed in hearty confirmation.

"Shoo! shoo!" The paper was again waving, the corn-husks rattling, when the peaked face of Miss Jemima Hummers appeared at the door. "An' the flies not all drove out, an' I calc'latin' to do a little bakin', an' this last idea of father's a worryin' me so. If it ain't the most provokin' thing in the world," thought Mrs. Simpson. So her tone was quite cool—that is, as cool as such a kind-hearted woman could make it—as she said to her visitor: "Will you set outside or in?"

The decision being that it would be cooler on the grass, Mrs. Simpson handed out two rocking chairs, and the women seated themselves under the apple trees, where the hens, soon discovering them, came clucking aimlessly about and the yellow cat, jumping into her mistress' lap, curled herself up into a large fluffy ball. A gentle breeze waved the branches of the tree, which, fanning the heated cheeks of Mrs. Simpson, caused her gradually to forget flies and other minor annoyances, and to regard Miss Jemima Hummers in a more kindly light.

"I just thought I'd bring my work round an' set with you awhile, Mis' Simpson," that lady remarked, after they were comfortably seated and the subject of the weather and crops had been carefully discussed. "I got my work all done up, an' I said to myself, I—"

"Well, I hadn't finished drivin' my flies out," interposed her friend. "I expect there's a hundred, at least, of them tiresome, buzzing creatures left in that kitchen. There was a terible big horsefly screechin' around, that I'd got my mind made up to drive out," she added, regretfully.

"Well, I guess it'll get out somehow," said her visitor, and then, changing the subject, added: "I s'pose you an' the deacon are goin' to the church sociable next week. But then, I don't know why I ask you that, seein you always are there. You ain't missed one for three years, have you, Mis' Simpson?"

"We ain't missed one for five years, exceptin' once, when the deacon had the rheumatism. I remember that time in partic'lar because I had made a new kind of cake to send—kind of a nut cake, with a few raisins sprinkled in—an' I wanted to see how it was enjoyed. I felt a little shaky, not knowin' exactly how much to put in; and there was just a little dent in the top when I took it out of the oven. Not really fallen, you know, but just enough to make me feel anxious. Mis' Davis knew how I was worryin' about it, so she took pains to stop in on her way home an' tell me that it wasn't a mite heavy; an' she heard Miss Brown an' Mis' Spooner both wonderin' what the receipt was, they thought it was so good. I don't know when I've felt so relieved."

"I know just exactly what your feelin's were, Mis' Simpson. I'm goin' to send a new kind of tea biscuit next time, an' I feel kind o' cold all over when I think, s'posin' they shouldn't be good. I hope you'll like 'em, Mis' Simpson."

Evidently Miss Jemima Hummers was fated to make unfortunate remarks, for just as a pleasurable excitement was felt by Mrs. Simpson in the tea biscuits, and she was about to ask for a minute description of their composition, that idea of the deacon's was thrust into her mind, and the possibility of their going away.

"I don't know's we'll be here. The deacon an' me are calc'latin' to take a trip to the city about that time."

Miss Hummers dropped her work—it was a piece of ruffling for her neck—and the needle fell out into the grass, so she had to get down on her knees and search carefully for it.

"Well, if ever I see anybody like you before, Mis' Simpson," she said, shooing away a hen that had come to assist, thinking she was grubbing for worms. "You say that just as though it didn't mean more'n goin' across the street. There, I've got it; 'twas stickin' in the hem of my dress, after all. If I remember right, you ain't never been to the city before, Mis' Simpson?"

"No, we ain't never been; an' as the deacon an' me ain't growin' any younger, we'd better go now if we're goin' at all. Cousin Abbie seems just set on havin' us come."

"Well, I hope you'll have a good time," she said, after sewing a few minutes in silence. "If there's anythin' in the world that I've a real desire to do it's to go to the city and see the sights. But I ain't never seen my way clear to do so, bein' all alone in the world," and Miss Jemima gave a little sniff of self pity.

Her companion rocked comfortably back and forth in her chair without making any response.

"I see what she's comin' to," she thought, "an' if I don't encourage her then my conscience's clear; but she's made up her mind to go along with us, an' if there's anybody in this world the deacon can't abide, it's Jemima Hummers. I do believe if I can only tell him she's goin' too, he'll give the whole thing up."

She glanced anxiously at Miss Hummer's sharp features and little bird-like eyes, which were blinking thoughtfully over her work, as she mentally laid out her tactics.

"If she don't follow this thing up it'll be the first time she didn't do what she set out to; but I ain't goin' to give her one mite of encouragement."

"What day you goin'?" said Miss Jemima at last.

"Well, Cousin Abbie said Saturday in her letter—that'll be day after to-morrow—so I s'pose the deacon'll calc'late to go then," was the answer. "I can look over my things an' do my packin' to-morrow, an' we can get off by the first train. I'll allow 'tain't as much time as I should like. There's my brown merino's got to be fixed at the bottom, an' the deacon's things 've got to be attended to, an'—"

Miss Jemima arose, and taking her hat from a branch of the tree where it had been hanging, tied it securely under her chin.

"Well, I must be a-goin,'" she said, "but I'll try an' drop in to-morrow, to see how you're gettin' on."

The gate clicked, and Mrs. Simpson was left alone, gazing at Miss Jemima's prim figure disappearing down the road, and regretfully thinking: "She never said she was goin' along with us; but maybe she will to-morrow."

It was Friday evening. The air was soft and cool, and laden with the sweet odor of fresh hay. The hens had gone to their roost, and all was quiet save an occasional cluck from a belated fowl, or the deep croak of some frog as it jumped with a splash into the pond back of the house. All about the barn looked clean and orderly, and peace and rest seemed to prevail everywhere.

All was to the deacon's mind, and still he was not happy, as he sat on the broad, stone door-step, with his wife just inside, rocking rapidly to and fro. The yellow cat jumped into his lap and tried to make herself comfortable for her usual evening nap, but without avail. So, after purring louder and louder to attract his attention, until it had become a gentle roar, she jumped down in quite a disgusted manner and walked sedately into the house.

"Did you say the packin' was all done, Maria?" he inquired for the third or fourth time. "I hope you ain't forgotten anythin', partic'larly the medicines. Ef we was to be taken sick at Abbie's I dunno what we'd do."

"Well, there's no denyin' that it's a sickly season in the city," was the cheerful answer; "but if you should happen to have a long attack of the rheumatism I guess Abbie an' me could pull you through."

Deacon Simpson gave a groan; then, suddenly recollecting himself, turned it into a cough. There was a long pause, finally broken by the deacon.

"Ef there's a disagreeable, homely cretur in the world it's that Jemima Hummers." Still the rockers creaked and there was no response; but a smile overspread the occupant's face, which the increasing darkness kindly hid. "I don't deny but what she's got her good p'ints," he continued, pricked by his conscience, "but they ain't my style, an' that's a fact. Besides, she ain't any right to go taggin' on with us; an' you know it, Maria," he added, fretfully.

"Well, I don't allow you have any right to talk about the face the Lord gave her. I say it ain't becomin' in you, deacon." Mrs. Simpson arose and went into the pantry, where she lighted the lamp, but after a moment put it out and resumed her seat.

"What's the matter?" inquired her husband, in surprise.

"Oh, nothin'. I was goin' to put the beans to soak, an' then I remember we wouldn't be here to eat 'em."

"There," said the deacon; "seems 's tho' I couldn't bear it. Why didn't you calk'late to have 'em to-night? Ef there's anythin' in the world I love, it's beans."

"Deacon Simpson, did you ever eat hot baked beans any night in your life 'ceptin' Saturday night? When people go to the city they've got to give up things."

A long-drawn sigh was the only response, and once again silence reigned. The spirits of Mrs. Simpson were steadily rising, while those of her husband were sinking, until he was completely plunged into the abyss of despair. There was no doubt that the deacon was getting homesick.

"Well, I reckon you'd better write Abbie we've changed our minds an' ain't comin' till next week. I ain't feelin' very well, an' I might be took sick the first thing. I don't think I'm overstrong anyhow," he added, plaintively. "I've got a pain in my back this minute."

"Now, Amos," was the decided answer, "if we're goin, at all, we're goin' to-morrow. There ain't any doubt but what Cousin Abbie's taken extra pains, an' has done a lot of cookin' already. What'd she think not to see us? Don't you think you'd ought to do as you'd be done by, deacon?"

"Well, I ain't a-goin' to do any arguin'," was the dignified answer. "I'll go look after the cattle, an' then we'll go to bed."

The sun rose bright and early the next morning, and danced and twinkled and fairly shook his sides with laughter and good-will as he shone with all his might right down on the Simpson homestead. But after examining things carefully, and making up his mind that all was not right, he beckoned to a little cloud, and buried his head from sight.

The old horse and double wagon stood outside the door. The back seat had been taken out to accommodate the small, hair-covered trunk, which Mrs. Simpson had insisted should be bound tightly down with a stout rope, as she had once heard of a trunk being left in the middle of the road, while the driver jogged contentedly on. Her husband had thought this precaution unnecessary, but after long discussion, finally yielded. He now sat on the seat, very stiff and straight, holding the reins while waiting for his wife to appear. The deacon had always had a strong desire to be dressy, but on account of his prominent position in the church he had not thought best to indulge this weakness, or been encouraged in it by his wife. But now that he was going to the city, that abomination of wickedness, he felt no one would be injured by his example, and so he had given full play to his taste. Some few would have questioned it; but to the deacon's mind his outfit was absolutely perfect. His long, lank form was encased in his black broadcloth coat, thrown jauntily open to display the white vest, a flowing plaid necktie and hair watch-chain. But the crowning glory was his hat, the purchase of which had cost him much consideration, but with the most satisfactory result. It was of white straw, trimmed with a blue ribbon, and would have had quite an air if it had not been fully two sizes too large, and rested on his ears. When a boy, his mother, in making or buying clothing for him, had always kept a little ahead of his then present size, in anticipation of his growing; and this idea had become so fixed in his own mind that now, at sixty-five years of age, he never thought of buying anything anything to exactly fit him, although his object in so doing was somewhat indefinite.

"Ain't you never comin', Maria?" he called out; "the train won't wait for us forever."

Just then Mrs. Simpson appeared at the door with a large bag in one hand and the yellow cat in the other. She was hot and out of breath from her exertions, and a hurried look at her husband completed her discomfiture.

"I'm mortified to death at the way Amos looks," she murmured to herself, as she turned to lock the door; "but I ain't goin' to say one word to rile him, but just keep prayin' that somethin' will turn up to keep us."

The deacon appeared buried in thought. He felt that his wife would not approve of his hat, and so had kept it out of sight until now. After the dreaded moment had passed he looked over his collar and surveyed her.

"What you goin' to do with the yaller cat?" he inquired.

"We've got to leave her at Polly's on the way down. I wouldn't trust Joe to feed her. There; you hold her while I get in."

The wagon creaked and groaned as Mrs. Simpson laboriously climbed in, and then visibly sank on her side when she was finally seated.

"Well, you ready? Get up, there!" and Deacon Simpson and his wife had really started for the city.

They jogged along for nearly a quarter of a mile in silence. When they came to the turn in the road which would hide the house from view he stopped a moment and, turning around, surveyed it.

"You'd better look at it, Maria, ef you want to see it for the last time. It looks kind o' lonesome," and he choked a little as he fumbled nervously at the reins.

"I think we'd better be goin' along," was the cool answer, but inwardly his wife's heart was wrung with pity for him. "But I sha'n't say one word; he's got to change his own mind," she thought.

"Do you s'pose the yaller cat 'll stay at Daughter Polly's?" was his next remark.

"No; I guess she'll run right back; they generally do."

"Well—do you s'pose she'll starve?" and his voice quivered perceptibly as he asked the question, for the "yaller cat" was his special pet.

"No; don't think she'll starve; but I kind o' guess she'll look peaked when we get back; an' then she'll sort o' worry for us all the time." The deacon moved uneasily, and once more they drove on in silence.

At Polly's matters were not much better. As the deacon embraced each of his grandchildren he visibly weakened, and his farewell to the baby was almost too much for him. He glanced imploringly at his wife, but no help came from that quarter; instead, she said: "We must drive pretty fast now, father, if we want to get there." But as they said good-by she whispered to her daughter: "I guess you can calc'late to come to supper same as usual, Sunday night."

Then they continued their way. The old horse had now come to a walk, a very slow one, but his master did not urge him. He sat perfectly listless, despair and misery written on his face, and even the glory of his attire failing to add one ray of comfort. As they approached the station Miss Jemima Hummer's angular form was seen pacing back and forth.

"Now or never," thought his wife, looking anxiously at him. He half rose from his seat, and, as she expressed it in telling Polly about it, afterward, "a real noble expression came into his face."

"Maria," he said, switching the horse and making a sharp turn, "ef you go to the city you can. I'm a-going home."—Leslie's Illustrated Weekly.

—Appalachie bay, Fla., was variously termed Apahlahchie, Abolnachie, Apeolatei, Palaxy, Palatcy and so on.

NIAGARA HARNESSED.

Wonderful Results Achieved by Skilled Mechanics.

Scientific Tests Show the Enormous Power Which Will Be Developed—Great Expectations of the Mammoth Project.

The experiments which have been going on at Niagara falls have been as delicate, as carefully conducted, as are those which the chemists or scientists make in the field of original research. The human intellect can scarcely conceive of the enormity of some of the results already obtained and of others which are expected. In the harnessing of a majestic implement which is to be used to develop an electric current of enormous power to another colossal machine, which is to receive the prodigious power that is in the Niagara current and convey it to this electric transformer, work was necessarily as delicate as that which the watchmaker has need of. The expectation is, says the New York Sun, that the revolutions of this dynamo will be so rapid that only by comparison can they be understood. Therefore, it has been necessary to test, and, with gradually increasing speed, the relations of the various parts of this complicated whole machine to one another. Suppose there had been a deviation of a fraction of an inch in measurements, or some chance for friction, which had been overlooked, and, therefore, unprovided for, or some variation from the quality of the bearings of the machine; then there was danger that after a certain rate of speed was reached there might come one mighty crash involving the whole machinery in destruction.

A few days ago some of the capitalists and a few scientists went to Niagara to see how far the tests had been made. Their going and coming was not known by the public, nor have they felt free to give any detailed information of their experiences. The number of revolutions of the dynamo was run run up to about one hundred and fifty and with perfect success. The wheels spun with the beauty and evenness of a top, upon which only the laws of nature operate. One hundred and fifty revolutions a minute do not convey the idea to the mind of the prodigious force that is required to produce that, but some idea may be obtained by saying that if the wheel were placed upon a railroad track and was set agoing at that speed it would cover a mile in a minute.

That, however, is scarcely fifty per cent. of the power that is contemplated. Gradually, carefully, patiently, this speed will be increased, and probably within the next three or four weeks, until, at last, when the full force of Niagara, so fast as the penstock can carry it, is delivered to the turbine, and by that agency redelivered to the dynamo, that instrument will receive a force capable of making it revolve at the rate of nearly three hundred revolutions a minute—not quite that, about two hundred and eighty, to be approximately accurate. That will represent a speed upon a railway of two miles a minute, and it is only by such comparison that the mind can grasp the enormity of these figures. At the rate of two miles a minute the continent would be crossed in twenty-four hours. The trip from New York to Chicago is made in six hours, or from Philadelphia to Queenstown in a single day. But that is not all. When at last this wheel is set going at this speed it must go day and night, week in and week out, at a rate equivalent to nearly three thousand miles every twenty-four hours, or equivalent to a journey around the world in eight days.

Of course, when the other wheels are set up, occasionally this one will be stopped, but by and by, if the commercial development of the electricity there obtained proves to be as great as now expected, there may be as many as three or four transformers whirling at this speed, which can be likened only to some of the movements of the celestial bodies.

The capitalists and most of the scientists who witnessed the experiments the other day have now no doubt about the commercial as well as the scientific success of this mighty work. Yet they admit that the problem will not be solved until the transformer converts the mighty force of Niagara into an electric current, and delivers that current to the shop, the trolley, the electric lighting plants in Buffalo and elsewhere.

When returning from Buffalo some of the scientists talked about this problem. The experiments they had witnessed were purely mechanical, for the transformer has not yet been permitted to convert the force into an electric current. Yet there was not one of the scientists who did not express the opinion that when the electrical machinery is attached and the current developed it will be found to have as perfectly solved the problems as all of the work hitherto has done.

The Telephone in Honolulu.

Each family of standing in Honolulu keeps a telephone, for which the charge is ten dollars a year. The invitations to all social functions are sent by telephone. This is not only a saving to the hostess in the matter of cards and postage, but it also obviates the necessity of the physical labor that attaches to such work. Some houses have a dozen telephones scattered about the different rooms, so that the family may communicate with friends without having to leave their chairs.

Retribution.

An interesting incident connected with recent changes in Corea is that of a native Corean who united with Foundry Methodist Episcopal church in Washington, D. C., when he was a student in this country a short time ago, and who is now the magistrate in charge at Ping Yang. He sentenced the mandarin who so severely persecuted the Christians there just before the war to be beaten with ninety-four blows for his misconduct on that occasion.